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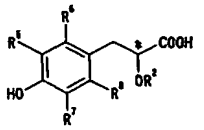
(54) Title: PROCESS FOR PRODUCING OPTICALLY ACTIVE 3-(4-HYDROXYPHENYL)PROPIONIC ACIDS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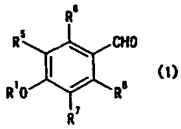
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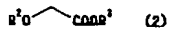
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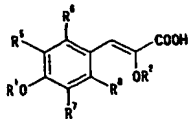
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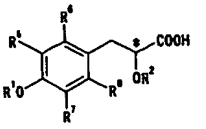
(5)

(57) Abstract: The present invention relates to a process for producing an optically active 3-(4-hydroxyphenyl)propionic acid useful as intermediates for medicines, through short steps in good yield and with high optical purity. More specifically, the present invention relates to a process for producing an optically active 3-(4-hydroxyphenyl)propionic acid of the formula (6): wherein R^2 is an alkyl group; R^5 to R^8 are each independently a hydrogen atom or a substituent; and the symbol * is an chiral carbon atom, or a salt thereof, which comprises reacting a benzaldehyde of the formula (1): wherein R^1 is a protective group; and R^5 to R^8 are each the same as defined above, with a glycolic acid derivative of the formula (2): wherein R^3 is a hydrocarbon group; and R^2 is the same as defined above, hydrolyzing the resulting product to give a cinnamic acid of the formula (4): wherein R^1, R^2 and R^5 to R^8 are each the same as defined above, or a salt thereof, and subjecting the resulting cinnamic acid (4) or a salt thereof to asymmetric hydrogenation to give an optically active phenylpropionic acid of the formula (5): wherein all the symbols are each the same as defined above, or a salt thereof, followed by deprotection.

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— *of inventorship (Rule 4.17(iv)) for US only*

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